

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by Strategic Lead - Resources

Audit Committee: 20 November 2019

Subject: Audit Action Plans

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee of:

- Recently issued Internal Audit action plans; and
- Progress made against action plans previously issued contained within Internal Audit and External Audit reports.

2. Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that Members consider and note the contents of this report and the appended Internal Audit report and action plans.

3. Background

3.1 When audit reports are issued by External Audit and Internal Audit departmental managers agree an action plan in relation to issues highlighted by the audit report. Progress on implementing the actions is monitored and reported to the Audit Committee.

4. Main Issues

Action Plans

4.1 The Appendices to this report are run in the days leading up to the meeting in order to provide an as up to date a position as possible. There has been a change to the formatting of the action plan content; this has been done in discussion with the Performance and Strategy Team to assist in providing better information to Members and management. Accordingly, the actions are now contained in one document at Appendix 1 to this report as follows:

- Theme 1: Recently Issued Internal Audit Action Plans;
- Theme 2: Incomplete Internal Audit Action Plans;
- Theme 3: Other Internal Audit Action Plans; and
- Theme 4: Incomplete External Audit Action Plans.

4.2 New Internal Audit Planned Audit Report

4.2.1 Project 163: Debt Recovery

An audit was conducted on Debt Recovery and covered the following aspects:

- Policies;

- Procedures;
- Write-offs; and
- Monitoring & Reporting.

The review highlighted the following areas of good practice:

- The debt recovery team have developed electronic systems, procedures and work practices to prioritise debts to be actioned. This includes the use of the Rent Sense system that prioritises outstanding rent debts. This enables the debt recovery team to best plan their work in an efficient manner; and
- The service has initiated contact with five other Local Authorities to compare a more detailed list of performance indicators than that provided within the Local Government Benchmarking Framework.

The review also highlighted that opportunities exist to strengthen internal controls and enhance the service provided, the most important of which are listed below:

- Review of Debt Recovery Officers/Assistants Work; and
- Policy review.

A link to the full report is provided here:

[Debt Recovery Audit Report](#)

- 4.3** The key areas of work performed by both Internal Audit and External Audit are carried out according to a risk based approach that determines the nature, extent and timing of the required audit assignments.
- 4.4** Internal Audit report recommendations have timescales for completion in line with the following categories:

Category	Expected implementation timescale
<u>High Risk:</u> Material observations requiring immediate action. These require to be added to the department's risk register	Generally, implementation of recommendations should start immediately and be fully completed within three months of action plan being agreed
<u>Medium risk:</u> Significant observations requiring reasonably urgent action.	Generally, complete implementation of recommendations within six months of action plan being agreed
<u>Low risk:</u> Minor observations which require action	Generally, complete

to improve the efficiency, effectiveness and economy of operations or which otherwise require to be brought to the attention of senior management.	implementation of recommendations within twelve months of action plan being agreed
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5. People Implications

5.1 There are no personnel issues with this report.

6. Financial and Procurement Implications

6.1 There are neither financial nor procurement implications arising directly from this report.

7. Risk Analysis

7.1 There is a risk that failure to implement actions within the agreed timescale may result in weaknesses in internal control arrangements remaining unresolved longer than is desirable.

8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

8.1 There are no issues.

9. Consultation

9.1 This report has been subject to consultation with appropriate Strategic Leads. In addition, services have been consulted in the update of action plans.

10. Strategic Assessment

10.1 This report relates to strong corporate governance.

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Date: 14 November 2019

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Appendices: 1: Audit Action Plans (Themes 1 to 4)

Background Papers: None

Wards Affected: All Wards